



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY
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TTY 711 or 800-833-6388 (For the Speech or Hearing Impaired)

April 6, 2005

Mr. Joel Teeley
Icicle Irrigation District
5594 Wescott Drive
Cashmere, WA 98815

Project: Colchuck Lake Dam
File No.: CH45-227

Dear Mr. Teeley:

Based on discussions I have had with you and the U.S. Forest Service, it is my understanding that the dam at the outlet of Colchuck Lake developed a structural crack over the winter that allowed some 800 acre-feet of stored water to drain out. Fortunately, the dam did not fail, and the leaking water caused no material damage to downstream property. As you discussed with Ray Newkirk of my staff, emergency drought funding may be available this year to help pay for an engineering assessment of the existing structure and the design and construction of repairs to repair/rebuild the dam.

I understand that the Irrigation District is anxious to make temporary repairs immediately to the crack so any remaining runoff can be captured and stored this year. However, we have no idea at this time of what caused the crack or how that crack's presence may have weakened the dam, as no structural engineer has been on site to investigate. At present no one can say with confidence that the dam is structurally sound. Until the dam is determined to be structurally sound, it must not be used to store an elevated pool.

All parties can be thankful that the recent dam incident did not result in material damage other than the highly regrettable loss of the stored irrigation water. We cannot run the risk of a second, potentially more catastrophic failure of a weakened dam that could threaten hikers, downstream property and environmental damages.

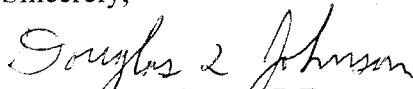
Therefore, in light of the foregoing, we are requiring the Icicle Irrigation District to maintain the reservoir elevation at Colchuck Lake no higher than the elevation of the crack on the dam. It must remain at or below this elevation until the dam can be evaluated and repaired. Furthermore, under RCW 90.03.350, anyone intending to modify/repair an existing dam must submit plans to the Department of Ecology for review and approval as to safety BEFORE beginning construction. Failure to comply voluntarily with this requirement may result in formal regulatory action being taken by Ecology to secure compliance.

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I recognize that this reservoir restriction places hardship on the District for their water supply in a drought year. However, our requirement to assure safety to life and property overrides water supply concerns. Hopefully, you can make up this water shortfall by drafting the other reservoirs in the Icicle Creek watershed. In the meantime, I will direct Mr. Newkirk to expedite your application for drought funding once it becomes available, to assist you in hiring an engineer to examine the dam and develop repair plans.

I look forward to working with the District and their engineer in repairing the Colchuck Lake Dam in a timely manner. Should you have any questions, please call Mr. Newkirk at (360) 407-6630, or me at (360) 407-6623.

Sincerely,



Douglas L. Johnson, P.E.
Supervisor, Dam Safety Office
Water Resources Program

cc: Bob Barwin, Ecology CRO, Yakima
Lisa Therrell, US Forest Service, Leavenworth
Dana Bardsley, US Forest Service, Okanogan